

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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R 031503Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8273
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NI
SUBJECT: SITUATION REMAINS CALM IN LAGOS

REF: LAGOS 5529

1. SUMMARY:UX INPITE RUMORS OF MORE DEMONSTRATIONS
MAY 2, SITUATION
REMAINS CALM IN LAGOS AND APPARENTLY
HAS RETURNED TO NORMAL IN ABEOKUTA. A NATIONAL
COUNCIL OF STATES (GOVERNORS) MEETING WAS HELD ON
SUNDAY AND STATE GOVERNORS HAVE APPEALED FOR CALM IN
THEIR AREAS. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS HAVE ISSUED
STATEMENTS DENYING INVOLVEMENT IN APRIL 28 RIOT AND
CRITICIZING THE FMG'S REPORT ON THE RECENT CRISIS.
THE CONTINUED CALM IS A GOOD SIGN AND WE HAVE NOT HEARD
ANY RUMORS OF MORE PROBLEMS. END CUMMARY.

2. DESPITE RUMORS OF PLANNED STUDENT DEMONSTRATION
MAY 7REPORTED SREFTEL, SITUATION IN GXS REMAINED
ECALM THROUGHOUT THE DAY. GERMAN AND ITALIAN EMBASSIES
ALSO HAD SIMILAR REPORTS FROM THEIR CONTACTS, SUGGESTING
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THAT SOMEONE HAD ATTEMPTED TO ORGANIZE A DEMONSTRATION
BUT WER UNABLE TO DO SO. ABEOKUTA WAS REPORTEDLY
BACK TO NORMAL AFTER DISTURBANCES ON MAY 1.

3. A NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATES (STATE GOVERNORS
PLUS FIVE SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE SUPREME MILITARY
COUNCIL) MEETING WAS HELD ON SUNDAY AND GOVERNORS

RETURNED TO THE STATES TO MAKE APPEALS FOR CALM. MOST DETAILED STATEMENT AVAILABLE WAS REPORT IN DAILY TIMES OF BAUCHI GOVERNOR, COLONEL MOHAMMED BELLO KALIEL BRIEFING OF HIS CABINET, EMIRS, CHIEFS AND OTHER LOCAL LEADERS. KALIEL DESCRIBED THE SITUATION AS "GRAVE AND VERY DELICATE" AND SAID THAT UNLESS HANDLED WITH CARE IT COULD VERY WELL PRODUCE "HIGHLY UNDESIRABLE CONSEQUENVI." HE QK, "...THE TRUTH WAF THAT OUR DETRACTORS AND SOME MISCHIEVOUS PEOPLE ARE OPERATING SECRETLY USING THE STUDENTS CRISIS AS A COVER TO FOMENT TROUBLE AND CREATE CHAOS IN ORDER TO DISCREDIT THE MILITARY ADMINISTRATION....YOU SHOULD REALIZE THAT THE WHOLE SHOW IS BEING STAGE MANAGED BY SABOTEURS OF THE GOVERNMENT WHO WANTED TO PUT THE COUNTRY INTO CHAOS AND THERBY ACHIEVE THEIR SELFISH ENDS THROUGH THE SUFFERING OF THE MASSES." THE STAR ALSO REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNOR OF ANAMBRA CANCELLED A PLANNED MAY DAY RALLY OF WORKERS IN ENUGU.

4. THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER OF THE NATIONAL (INTERIM) ORGANIZATION OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS (NONS) ISSUED A STATEMENT DISASSOCIATING THE STUDENTS FROM THE APRIL 28 RIOT. HE SAID, "WHAT THE NUNS EMBARKED UPON WAS A PEACEFUL PROTEST. WE HAVE THUS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEEN SHOCKED AND AS DISMAYED AS ALL OTHER LAW-ABIDING AND PEACE-LOVING NIGERIAN S BY THE UNCALLED FOR VIOLENCE WITHIN THE PASS FEW DAYS. HE ALSO CHARGED THAT DELIVERATE EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE TO INCITE PEOPLE TO VIOLENCE IN THE GUISE OF STUDENTS IN ORDER TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT NIGERIAN STUDENTS WERE "HOOLIGANS AND VANDALS , THUS ELIENATING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THEIR CAUSE. HE CLAIMED THAT THE STUDENTS HAD BEGUN INVESTIGATIONS TO FIND OUT WHO THE SABOTEURS AND THEIR COLLABORATORS WERE.

5. THE PRESIDENTS OF THE LAGOS UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY OF IFWUSTUDENTS UNIONS HAVE ALSO ISSUED A JOINT STATEMENT RLNUTING THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNEMTN'S REPORT ON THE RECENT CRISIS. THEY SAID, "OUR UNIONS HAVE RECEIVED WITH UTMOST SHOCK THE RECENT STATEMENT BY THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT THAT THE STUDENTS' PROTEST OVER INCREASE IN FEES IS A MANIFESTATION OF SABOTEURS AND THAT STUDENTS ARE BEING USED. WE CATEGORICALLY SAY THAT THIS IS

MOST UNTRUE AND MOST UNFAIR TO THE PERSONALITY AND INTEGRITY OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS." THE STATEMENT REPORTEDLY EMPHASIZED THE STUDENTS HAD AGREED WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON MANY ISSUES AND SAID, "NOW THAT WE SIMPLY DISAGREE ON AN ISSUE, THE GOVERNMENT SEES US AS ENEMIES AND, MOST UNFORTUNATE, AS A GROUP INTERESTED IN BRINGING ABOUT A CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT." THE STATEMENT ALSO REJECTED THE CORNER'S INQUESTS AS "MERE LEGAL FORMALITIES WITH NO RELEVANCE TO OUR PRESENT SITUATION" AND CALLED FOR JUDICIAL PROBES INTO STUDENT DEATHS.

6. COMMENT: WE VIEW THE FAILURE OF A DEMONSTRATION TO MATERIALIZE YESTERDAY AS A GOOD SIGN. HOWEVER, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STUDENTS AND THE FMG REMAIN FAR APART ON THE BASIC ISSUES. THE CRISIS MAY NOW PASS, BUT THE FMG IN THE END MAY HAVE TO STEP BACK FROM SOME OF ITS EARLIER DECISIONS.
WYMAN

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